

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 72

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 96

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 72—Relative to the Vernon L. Sturgeon Memorial Highway, and to the Marilyn Jorgenson Reece Memorial Interchange.

[Filed with Secretary of State August 15, 2006.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 72, Maldonado. Vernon L. Sturgeon Memorial Highway and the Marilyn Jorgenson Reece Memorial Interchange.

This measure would designate a portion of State Highway Route 101 in San Luis Obispo County as the Vernon L. Sturgeon Memorial Highway. The measure would also designate the Interstate 10 and Interstate 405 interchange in Los Angeles as the Marilyn Jorgenson Reece Memorial Interchange. The measure would request the Department of Transportation to determine the cost of appropriate plaques and markers showing these special designations, and upon receiving donations from nonstate sources sufficient to cover the cost, to erect those plaques and markers.

WHEREAS, Vernon L. Sturgeon was born on October 1, 1915, in Chandler, Arizona, and was one of 10 children born to George and Josephine Sturgeon; and

WHEREAS, Vernon L. Sturgeon attended schools in Paso Robles and followed in his father's footsteps as a milk distributor in San Luis Obispo County for 20 years; and

WHEREAS, Vernon L. Sturgeon served on the Paso Robles City Council for eight years and as the Mayor of the City of Paso Robles for three years; and

WHEREAS, In 1961, Vernon L. Sturgeon was elected to the State Senate for Senate District 29, and served in the Legislature until 1966, when that district was reapportioned; and

WHEREAS, In 1966, Senator Vernon L. Sturgeon became a key advisor to Governor Ronald Reagan and, in 1967, became the Governor's Legislative Liaison Officer, and also served as Chief Deputy Director of the Department of Public Works; and

WHEREAS, Senator Vernon L. Sturgeon was appointed by Governor Reagan to the Public Utilities Commission in 1969, and was later reappointed by Governor Jerry Brown, making him one of the few people to be appointed to the same position by both governors. Senator Vernon L. Sturgeon served on the commission until 1979, which included a three-year term as president of the commission; and

WHEREAS, Senator Vernon L. Sturgeon was a philanthropist who, while a milk distributor, provided milk to those who could not afford to pay for it; and

WHEREAS, Senator Vernon L. Sturgeon played a significant role in securing the temporary site for the original Cuesta College, and was instrumental in securing funds for a number of projects at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. Also, through his efforts, the library at Hearst Castle was made available to University of California students for research; and

WHEREAS, Senator Vernon L. Sturgeon died on November 7, 2004, was preceded in death by his wife of 51 years, Esther, in 1990, and was survived by their daughters Elaine Healey and Carolyn Rexius, son Rick Sturgeon, brother Wilmer Sturgeon, sister Mildred Barclay, eight grandchildren, and 11 great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Senator Vernon L. Sturgeon carried the appropriations bill in the Senate for funding the construction of State Highway Route 46 from Paso Robles to the coast in San Luis Obispo County; and

WHEREAS, It would be a fitting tribute to Senator Vernon L. Sturgeon to name a portion of State Highway Route 101 between the Cities of Paso Robles and Atascadero in San Luis Obispo County as the “Vernon L. Sturgeon Memorial Highway”; and

WHEREAS, Marilyn Jorgenson Reece was born and raised in North Dakota and earned a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering from the University of Minnesota in 1948; and

WHEREAS, Marilyn Jorgenson Reece moved to Los Angeles with her parents shortly after graduation in 1948, and went to work for the State Division of Highways, which later became the Department of Transportation, as a junior civil engineer in Los Angeles; and

WHEREAS, After six years of experience required to sit for the Professional Engineers Exam, Marilyn Jorgenson Reece became the state’s first fully licensed female civil engineer in 1954; and

WHEREAS, In 1962, Marilyn Jorgenson Reece received the Governor’s Design Excellence Award from Governor Pat Brown for designing the Interstate 10 and Interstate 405 interchange; and

WHEREAS, Marilyn Jorgenson Reece became the Division of Highway’s first woman resident engineer for construction projects shortly after receiving that award; and

WHEREAS, The three-level Interstate 10 and Interstate 405 interchange designed by Marilyn Jorgenson Reece opened in 1964 and was the first interchange designed in California by a woman engineer; and

WHEREAS, Urban critic Reyner Banham, author of Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies, admired the wide-swinging curved ramps connecting the two freeways, and wrote that the Interstate 10 and Interstate 405 interchange “is a work of art, both as a pattern on the map, as a monument against the sky, and as a kinetic experience as one sweeps through it”; and

WHEREAS, During her 35-year career, Marilyn Jorgenson Reece's projects included serving as senior engineer for the completion of State Highway Route 210 through Sunland in 1975—at the time, the largest construction project the Department of Transportation had ever awarded—at \$40 million; and

WHEREAS, After retiring in 1983, Marilyn Jorgenson Reece taught engineering classes at Cal State Long Beach; and

WHEREAS, During Women's History Month in 1983, the Los Angeles City Council honored Marilyn Jorgenson Reece for making significant contributions to the city; and

WHEREAS, In 1991, Marilyn Jorgenson Reece received life membership in the American Society of Civil Engineers; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring, That the Legislature hereby officially designates the portion of State Highway Route 101 between Spring Street in Paso Robles and Santa Barbara Road in Atascadero, in San Luis Obispo County, as the Vernon L. Sturgeon Memorial Highway; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature hereby officially designates the Interstate 10 and Interstate 405 interchange, also known as the San Diego-Santa Monica Freeway Interchange, in the City of Los Angeles, as the Marilyn Jorgenson Reece Memorial Interchange; and be it further

Resolved, That the Department of Transportation is requested to determine the cost of appropriate plaques and markers, consistent with the signing requirements for the state highway system, showing these special designations, and upon receiving donations from nonstate sources sufficient to cover that cost, to erect those plaques and markers; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the Department of Transportation and to the author for appropriate distribution.